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Availability for Employment of Rural People in the Upper Monongahela Valley, West Virginia



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WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND HOME ECONOMICS
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MORGANTOWN

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Summary

This publication reports the findings of a survey on availability for employment of persons in the open-country population of the Upper Monongahela Valley, West Virginia. Using data collected in July 1954, the report is based on a sample of 2,287 persons 14 years of age and over.

Almost 16 per cent of the people surveyed were either looking for work or were potentially available for employment at the time of the survey. This was at a time when West Virginia ranked first among all the states in the percentage of insured workers who were unemployed. Among the male heads of households, almost 20 per cent were available for employment.

Not all those available for work were unemployed at the time of the interview. Almost half of them had done some work during the survey week. Many had been unemployed during part of the previous 12 months, but at the time of the interview they were holding temporary or fill-in jobs until they could find more suitable employment.

Male heads of households were more active in looking for work than were other household members. This was probably related to their greater family responsibilities.

During the previous 12 months, only one-fifth of all those available for work during the week of record had been employed for as long as 200 days. The amount of time spent looking for employment varied with age: those looking for the longest time were older persons. Few, if any, however, would be considered too old to work. Unemployment compensation had been of considerable help to many.

Nine out of 10 of the workers, both male and female, preferred full-time nonfarm work. A majority of males who preferred nonfarm work said they were willing to leave home to perform such work. Apparently, the younger household heads who were looking for work were less willing to leave home than either the older heads or other males. Male heads in households with lower levels of living were more willing to leave their families than those in other households.

Three-fourths of the male heads of households reported that they were willing to move their families to new locations in order to do nonfarm work. Heads of households unwilling to move their families away were usually older than those who were willing to do so. Also, high levels of living tended to be a deterrent to family mobility.

Few of the persons available for work had any specialized vocational training, but a considerable number reported a background of nonfarm

employment. A majority said they had been employed in the mining and manufacturing industries. Unskilled work was more frequently reported than skilled work. Relatively few had performed farm work exclusively.

Approximately a fifth of those available for employment had worked away from home during the previous 12 months.

Some of those who reported no work at all during the 12 months prior to the interview were young people preparing to enter the labor force. Among those available for work, those persons with some work experience appeared to be more favorably disposed toward leaving home than those without such experience.

Household incomes in the Valley were relatively modest. Incomes of those households in which the available workers lived were only slightly lower on the average.

Availability for Employment of Rural People in the Upper Monongahela Valley, West Virginia

W. F. PORTER AND W. H. METZLER*

CERTAIN rural areas of the United States have long been faced with critical economic problems. One of these areas is the Appalachian Mountain region. This region centers in West Virginia, the western portions of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and extends westward into eastern and central Kentucky and Tennessee. This study relates to that part of the region that lies in West Virginia along the upper reaches of the Monongahela River.

In this area, the pressure of the population on land and other economic resources is relatively great. Farming as a source of livelihood is limited to a considerable degree by the rough topography, as well as other factors. Much of the population is therefore dependent, at least partly, on nonfarm work opportunities. During the early part of 1954, rural nonfarm employment declined sharply from the immediate postwar years. As a result, from March, 1954, through October, 1954, West Virginia ranked first among all the states in percentage of insured workers who were unemployed.¹ At the same time, underemployment² both on farms and in nonfarm areas was probably as high or higher than at any time since World War II.

This report incorporates the findings of one phase of a cooperative research project on the utilization of rural manpower and resource use in the Upper Monongahela Valley. Research plans were developed during the spring of 1954. Collection of data by personal interviews with households selected at random began in June and was completed during July of that year. The project was financed and carried out by the West Virginia University Agricultural Experiment Station and the Production Economics Research Branch, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Personnel from both these agencies planned and directed the research.³

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¹U.S. Department of Labor, *The Labor Market and Employment Security*, (March-October issues), Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1954. Insured workers are those covered by unemployment insurance.

²Underemployment refers in general to a situation in which an individual's time and effort are not utilized to their full potential.

³W. W. Armentrout and Ward F. Porter, W Va. University Agricultural Experiment Station; and O. J. Seoville, Joe R. Motheral, W. H. Metzler, R. B. Glasgow, and J. V. McElveen, Production Economics Research Branch, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The main objective of the study was to determine the degree of utilization of the rural labor force and the resource-adjustment problems of low-production farms in the survey area. Information such as this, it was felt, might help to insure higher levels of living for residents of the Valley by promoting more efficient utilization of both manpower and other resources.

In keeping with this objective, the project was designed to provide information that would be useful to residents of the Valley in general, interested State and Federal agencies, and potential employers who might be contemplating industrial development in this area. This information is to be presented in a series of reports, each of which will deal with one or more phases of the current situation.

The present report is the first of the series to be published. It is primarily concerned with people in the sample population who are available for employment. These people were divided into two groups. The first group consists of those who, at the time of interview, were more or less actively looking for work. The second group comprises those who were not actively looking for work but who considered themselves available if the right opportunity were presented. Some individuals in both groups reported some kind of employment during the week just prior to the interview (Table 5).

The Problem

THE STATE

TRENDS IN NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

Nonfarm employment in West Virginia has been on the decline for many years. From a low point during the 1930's, nonagricultural employment climbed to approximately 511,000 persons in 1948, and then receded to about 465,000 in 1951.¹ Employment in bituminous coal mining also declined, from about 132,000 persons in 1948 to approximately 71,000 in 1951.² The rate of decline in nonagricultural employment between 1953 and 1951 was considerably greater for West Virginia than for the United States as a whole—7 and 3 per cent, respectively.³ Although much of this decline in West Virginia's nonfarm employment occurred in the bituminous coal mining industry, other industries of importance to the State's economy also suffered considerable losses in employment. These included transportation, the stone, clay and glass industries, chemicals, and the lumber, wood products, and furniture

¹W. Va. Department of Employment Security, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Nonfarm Employment in W. Va., Annual Averages, 1948-1954*, Charleston, W. Va., Sept. 14, 1955.

²Ibid.

³Leo F. Mahan, "Statement Before the Joint Committee on the Economic Report, U.S. Senate," *January 1955 Economic Report of the President*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Gov't. Printing Office, 1955, p. 265.

industries.⁷ Some of these industries, particularly coal mining, and the stone, clay, and glass group, are of major importance to the economy of the Upper Monongahela Valley.

The gravity of the situation in 1954 is further evidenced by the classification of 13 of the State's 16 labor market areas as areas of "very substantial labor surplus." The remaining 3 areas were described as areas of "substantial labor surplus."⁸

UNEMPLOYMENT AND OUTMIGRATION

According to the Bureau of the Census,⁹ West Virginia's civilian population declined between April 1950, and July 1954. From an all-time peak of approximately 2,005,000 in 1950, West Virginia lost an estimated 59,000 persons, or 2.9 per cent. Only two other states lost in population during this period—New Hampshire (−0.7 per cent) and Arkansas (−0.9 per cent). Furthermore, for the decade of the 1940's, Census data reveal a net loss, because of migration, of 203,000 persons.¹⁰

The most likely explanation for this exodus is one that is basically related to what has been called the pressure of population on existing resources. Although future industrial developments may change the situation, the economy of West Virginia is not as yet diversified enough or highly enough developed to support all its population adequately. The agricultural resources are such that the expanding population cannot depend solely upon agriculture for its livelihood. Nonfarm work opportunities for primarily unskilled or semiskilled labor are as yet insufficient to support the population adequately. In addition, there is the current reduction in employment opportunities in the State's leading industry—the mining of bituminous coal.

No doubt the outmigration of some of this labor surplus in the past has helped the unemployment situation. During 1951, however, evidence¹¹ suggests that outmigration declined; and many of those who previously left the State apparently returned as employment dropped elsewhere.

THE STATE'S FINANCIAL POSITION

The problem has been aggravated by a reduction in State revenues. According to the Fishman report, "receipts of the general revenue fund during the last six months of 1951 were \$3,000,000 less than receipts during the last six months of 1953."¹² This necessitated a reduction in

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid. The specific classifications were developed by the U. S. Bureau of Employment Security.

⁹Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 101, Washington, D.C., Oct. 25, 1954.

¹⁰Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the U. S.: 1954*, Washington, D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1954, p. 20. The computation in round number is as follows: 1940 population (1,302,000) + natural increase (638,000) = net loss to April 1950 of 2,000,000. 2,000,000. Deducting the actual population in 1950 (2,005,000) results in a net civilian migration of 203,000 persons.

¹¹Fishman, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

¹²Ibid.



Mechanization of mines has made many miners available for other employment.

expenditures for most State agencies, including the Department of Public Assistance. "Financial grants . . . to the aged, the blind, dependent children and the unemployables, which were already inadequate . . . (were) reduced to 70 per cent of a minimum subsistence budget."¹² The situation was particularly grave for those unemployed persons who had exhausted their unemployment compensation benefits. In West Virginia, anyone who is physically and mentally capable of work is generally not eligible for public assistance.¹³

THE COAL INDUSTRY

The 1951 unemployment crisis in West Virginia stemmed partly from certain developments in the State's leading industry—the production of bituminous coal. Simply stated, these developments include "the displacement of bituminous coal by petroleum and natural gas, and the accelerated mechanization of mining operations since the war."¹⁴ As a result of these factors, coal production and mine employment have declined over the last few years. Despite indications of some increase in both production and employment during the early months of 1955, the immediate future, at least for mine employment, does not look too

¹² Ibid., p. 264.

¹³ This general policy is considered necessary by the Department of Public Assistance because of the cost of welfare fund.

¹⁴ Ibid.



Agriculture in West Virginia is handicapped by rough topography.

encouraging. The demand for other types of fuel will probably continue; and the mechanization of the industry has been, if anything, encouraged by recent developments.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture in West Virginia, although important to the economy of the State, has grave limitations as a primary source of livelihood for the 410,922 persons living on farms in 1950.¹⁶ Limited by the rough topography, the average farm in West Virginia is handicapped in competing successfully with farms in other areas where mechanization has helped to increase efficiency of farming operations. With recent technological and other developments, the relative importance of agriculture and the economic position of West Virginia farmers has declined.

According to the Census of Agriculture, there were 81,131 farms in West Virginia in 1950. Only 11 per cent (11,121) of these reported farm sales of \$1,500 or more.¹⁷ Between 1953 and 1954, cash receipts from farm marketings declined from \$126,156,000 to \$123,110,000.¹⁸ Even when government payments are included, the average total cash

¹⁶Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Pt. 18, W.Va., Chap. II.

¹⁷Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1950*, Vol. II, Washington, D.C. Gov't. Printing Office, 1952, p. 764.

¹⁸U.S. Department of Agriculture, *The Farm Income Situation*, March, 1954, p. 11, and March, 1955, p. 13.



Agriculture in West Virginia is handicapped by its inability to mechanize economically.

farm income for 1951 was only \$1,529.¹⁹ In this respect, West Virginia ranked 18th in the nation.²⁰ In view of this, it is not surprising to find that West Virginia ranked eighth from the bottom in 1954 in terms of farm family levels of living.²¹

It is evident from the above data that farming in West Virginia is not a profitable activity for many families. Fortunately, in the past, many farm people have worked at nonfarm employment. During 1949, for example, approximately 11 per cent of the Census farm operators worked off the farm for 100 or more days.²² The decline in nonfarm employment during 1951, however, restricted opportunities for such off-farm employment.

THE UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY

Most of what has been said regarding the economic situation in West Virginia as a whole can be applied to the Upper Monongahela Valley area. Many of the industries that suffered declines in production

¹⁹ Average computed on the basis of a total cash farm income (including government payments) of \$1,529 per acre in 1951 and the total number of farms in 1950 (81,131).

²⁰ United States Census Bureau, *News Letter*, Vol. XL4, No. 4, March 16, 1955, Chapel Hill, N.C. (Note: Government payments were not included in the *News Letter* average, but for 1951 are shown on this page.)

²¹ United States Census Bureau, *Farm Operators' Levels of Living: For States, 1950-54*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Agricultural Marketing Service, May, 1955, p. 8.

²² Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Causes of Agriculture: 1950*, Vol. 1, Part 15, Washington, D.C.: Printing Office, 1952, p. 329.

and employment during 1954 and earlier years are represented in the Valley. This would include particularly the production of bituminous coal, and the stone, clay, and glass industries.

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The three most important industrial counties in the Upper Monongahela Valley are Harrison, Marion, and Monongalia. These counties represent 3 of the 16 labor market areas in the State. Since May 1954, when the U.S. Bureau of Employment Security revised its classification system, these three areas have been designated either as areas of "very substantial labor surplus" (category IV-3) or areas of "substantial labor surplus" (IV-A).²³ Between April 1953, and April 1954, the percentage decrease in employment for each of the three areas was as follows: 8.4, 3.4, and 9.0, respectively.²⁴ During the same period, the number of unemployed persons increased 157.7 per cent, 21.4 per cent, and 78.1 per cent, respectively.²⁵ As mining is a vital industry in each of these areas, it is well to note the percentage decline in the number employed in this industry for the same period: 17.2, 14.4, and 31.9, respectively.²⁶

Since October 1954, the employment situation in at least two of the above labor market areas has improved somewhat.²⁷ The degree of change, however, has been relatively slight. In all three areas, the number employed in April 1955 was considerably less than in April 1953.

The above data suggest that these counties are problem areas from an economic viewpoint. No claim is made that the Valley is completely representative of the State as a whole. To the extent, however, that it has an occupational and industrial structure comparable to that of the State,²⁸ the results of this study may be pertinent for West Virginia as a whole.

The Survey Area²⁹

SOME IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS

GENERAL

The Upper Monongahela Valley is an area of 10 counties situated along the upper reaches of the Monongahela River.³⁰ The Valley has

²³See monthly issues of U.S. Department of Labor, *The Labor Market and Employment Security*, *op. cit.*

²⁴W.Va. State Employment Service, Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1954.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷W.Va. State Employment Service, *Labor Market Digest*, Vol. 2, No. 1, May 1955.

²⁸Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. 11, Part 18, W.Va. Chap. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-85.

²⁹The counties are as follows: Barbour, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, Tucker, and Upshur.

³⁰Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this section were derived from the *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*.

a land area of 4,44 square miles, almost equivalent to that of Connecticut. With a 1950 population of 368,651 persons, or 18.4 per cent of the State's population, the area had a relative high population density of 82.9 per square mile. The number of people residing in each of the counties ranged from 10,600 to 85,296.

THE POPULATION: RESIDENCE COMPOSITION

Like the population of the State, almost two-thirds of the residents in the Valley are rural¹¹ people. Most of these rural people are classified by the Census as rural-nonfarm. They live in small towns and villages or in the open country. More than two-fifths of the population in the Valley is made up of rural-nonfarm residents. About one-fifth of the population live on farms, and a little more than one-third reside in urban centers of 2,500 or more persons. As shown by Table 1, the residence distribution of the Valley population corresponds rather closely with that of the State.

TABLE 1. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE 1950 POPULATION IN THE UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, AND THE STATE, BY RESIDENCE*

| PLACE OF RESIDENCE | 1950 POPULATION | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | VALLEY | STATE |
| | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
| Urban | 36.3 | 34.6 |
| Rural-Nonfarm | 41.5 | 43.9 |
| Rural-Farm | 22.2 | 20.5 |

*Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. 11, Part 48, Chap. B.

AGE COMPOSITION

In age composition, the people of the Valley area are similar to those of the State as a whole. With relatively high birthrates, the percentages of both population groups in the younger brackets are conspicuously higher than in the more highly urbanized areas. As indicated in Table 2, the Valley has a somewhat lower proportion of persons under 20 than the State; but the relative number of young dependents in the Valley is still higher than in the urbanized New England area or in the United States as a whole. An additional point of difference between the Valley counties and the State, although a minor one, is the slightly higher proportion of older people living in the Valley.

OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES

Most of the residents of the Valley earn their livelihood through non-farm employment. As suggested previously, the distribution of the

¹¹The term "rural," as used by the Bureau of the Census, includes both those who live on farms and those who reside in rural area but not on farms. For census definitions of the three residence categories—urban, rural-farm, and rural-nonfarm, see the introductory comment in the *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*.

TABLE 2. AGE COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION IN THE UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, THE STATE, NEW ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED STATES, 1950*

| AREA | AGE COMPOSITION OF RESIDENTS | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | TOTAL | 0-19 YEARS | 20-59 YEARS | 60 AND OVER YEARS |
| | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
| Valley | 100 | 37.3 | 50.4 | 12.3 |
| State | 100 | 40.0 | 49.8 | 10.2 |
| New England | 100 | 31.0 | 54.7 | 14.3 |
| United States | 100 | 34.0 | 53.8 | 12.2 |

*For data on the Valley and the State, see: Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. II, Part 48, W.Va., Chap. B; for New England, see: Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.: 1954*, op. cit., p. 34; for U.S., see: Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. II, Part 1, Chap. B, p. 89.

TABLE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY AND THE STATE, BY INDUSTRY GROUPS, 1950*

| INDUSTRY GROUP | EMPLOYED PERSONS 14 AND OVER | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|
| | VALLEY | STATE |
| | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
| Total employed | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries | 9.7 | 9.9 |
| Mining | 21.9 | 21.4 |
| Construction | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| Manufacturing | 17.2 | 18.9 |
| Transportation, communication, other public utilities | 8.4 | 8.5 |
| Wholesale-retail trade | 15.4 | 15.4 |
| Finance, insurance, and real estate | 1.5 | 1.6 |
| Business and repair services | 2.0 | 1.8 |
| Personal services | 1.8 | 4.8 |
| Entertainment and recreation services | .7 | .8 |
| Professional and related services | 9.0 | 7.6 |
| Public administration | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| Other | 1.8 | 1.6 |

*Data from Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. II, Part 48, Chap. 3.

population in the different industry groups corresponds fairly closely with that of the State. Table 3 reveals the industries of greatest importance in terms of employment for both the Valley and the State. These would include mining, manufacturing (particularly stone, clay, and glass), trade, and finally, agriculture. Less than 10 per cent of the employed labor force in both areas were engaged in agriculture as farm operators, managers, farm laborers, and unpaid family workers 14 years old and over.³²

The relatively close correspondence between the Valley and the State in the distribution of workers by industry is duplicated so far as occupational composition is concerned. In both areas, the highest propor-

³²See definitions in introduction to *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*. Unpaid family workers are included only if they worked for 15 hours or more during the Census week. Note that the classification "rural-farm" as used by the Census refers to residence and not employment.



Members of this rural household commute to industrial employment.

tion of employed workers are classified by the Census as operatives and kindred workers. Almost one-third of the Valley's employed labor force are so classified. This Census category includes a wide variety of specific occupations, most of which are concerned with the operation of certain machinery—bus and taxi drivers, dressmakers, and laundry workers. The fact that coal miners are also included may help to explain the relatively high percentage of workers in this classification.

The next most important occupational group consists of craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers. Close to 11 per cent of the employed persons in the Valley area—as well as in the State—fall into this grouping.

Only three other occupational categories have more than 7 per cent of the employed group: clerical and kindred workers (8 per cent); professional, technical, and kindred workers (7.6 per cent); and nonfarm managers, officials, and proprietors (7.1 per cent). Only a small proportion (6 per cent) operate farms.

These data show that operating a farm, either as owner-operator or as a salaried manager, is of secondary importance as compared with certain other lines of employment. The fact that the Valley and the State both depend primarily on nonfarm industries, so far as employment is concerned, can be further documented by a brief analysis of the occupations of rural farm residents.

In 1950, there were 81,761 farm residents in the Valley. Of these, 23,661 were employed at the time of the Census. Less than 3 in 10 of these employed persons, both males and females, said they operated or managed a farm. This does not include farm laborers or unpaid family workers. Almost as many employed persons living on farms in 1950 were operatives and kindred workers in other industries—27.2 per cent. Many of this latter group were employed in bituminous coal mining. Recent economic developments in this industry have reduced the employment of many farm people.

As noted earlier, many unpaid family workers and some hired laborers are employed in agriculture in the Valley. Approximately 12 per cent of the Valley's employed rural-farm residents in 1950 were classified as farm laborers and unpaid family workers. But even when this group is added to those operating or managing farms, the percentage of employed persons living on farms who were primarily working in agriculture was less than 40 per cent. This figure may even exaggerate the extent of agricultural employment, as some unpaid family workers on farms work for as little as 15 hours a week. It should be clear, therefore, that agriculture plays an important but relatively minor role in the employment picture of the Valley.

AGRICULTURE IN THE VALLEY

In many respects, farming in the Valley is roughly comparable to that in the State as a whole. Other reports based on this project will deal with agriculture as a source of employment and as an industry. In this report we merely present a few of the more important characteristics of agriculture in the 10-county sample area.

In 1950, the 16,956 Census farms in the Valley area represented approximately 20 per cent of the total number of Census farms in the State.³³ Only 28 per cent of these farms were classified by the Census as commercial farms.³⁴ The comparable figure for the State as a whole was 29 per cent. In both instances most of the commercial farms were primarily involved in livestock enterprises. Approximately 11 per cent of the commercial farms in the Valley reported sales of \$250 to \$1,199. In terms of income, this represented a marginal group. By Census definition it included only those farm operators who worked off the farm for less than 100 days during 1949, and whose total household income from nonfarm sources was less than farm sales.

³³Agricultural data in this section of the report were derived from: Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1950*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*

³⁴See definitions in "Introduction" of *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1950*, *op. cit.* Essentially, commercial farms are defined as: (1) Farms with value of sales of farm product of \$1,200 or more; and (2) those with a value of sales of \$250-\$1,199 where the operator worked off the farm less than 100 days in the year and where household income from nonfarm sources was less than the value of all farm sales.

Of the 12,276 noncommercial farms in the Valley in 1950, approximately 70 per cent were classified by the Census as residential farms, and almost 30 per cent as part-time farms.³⁵ Most of these farmers reported sales of less than \$250 during 1949. As might be expected, many of them received more income from nonfarm than from farm sources. In any event, there was greater dependence on nonfarm employment and income by members of this group than by those living on commercial farms. The reduction in nonfarm work opportunities in the recent past has posed a serious problem to many farm people in the Upper Monongahela Valley.

Persons Available for Work

GENERAL

As previously indicated, this report is concerned primarily with those persons in the sample population who were either looking for work, more or less actively, or potentially available for work, but not looking, at the time of the interview.³⁶ The extent to which an individual has tried to find work or is available for work is not easily determined. The attitude of the individual respondent is generally the only feasible criterion. Therefore, the determination of the degree of availability (that is, "looking for work" or simply "available") of any particular person is subjective to a considerable degree. Consequently, those who are classified in this report as "looking for work" are individuals who said they were looking for work at the time of the interview. Likewise, those reported as "available for work"—a concept even less precise than "looking"—are those who considered themselves available but not actively looking for employment. Both of these groups include some individuals who reported having some kind of employment during the week prior to the interview (Table 5).

This approach differs from that of the Census and of most other sources of labor force information. The conventional classification distinguishes between those who have employment, those who are unemployed but looking for work, and those who are not in the labor force (that is, those not employed and not looking for work).³⁷ This report attempts to classify individuals according to their degree of interest in finding employment, regardless of their current employment status.

³⁵ For precise definitions of part-time and residential farms, see "Introduction" in *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1950*, op. cit.

³⁶ It is likely that there were many in the sample population whose rate of remuneration was below minimum accepted standards, or who had less work than they desired. Some of these underemployed or "inadequately remunerated" individuals may not have reported themselves as looking or available for work. To the extent that this is true, the proportion of persons considered potentially available for work in this sample has been understated. For a discussion of the "inadequately employed," see: L. F. Thucoit and M. J. Hagood, *Labor Force Definition and Measurement*, N.Y., Social Science Research Council, Bul. 56, N.Y., 1947.

³⁷ See Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. II, Part 48, W.Va., Chap. B, op. cit., for a discussion of labor force concepts.

TABLE 4. AVAILABILITY FOR WORK OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER,
BY SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY,
WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS | ALL PERSONS | | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK* | | | | | | NOT AVAILABLE FOR WORK** | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|--------------------------------|----|
| | | | ALL PERSONS | | ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | | |
| | | | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | | |
| All persons | 2,287 | 100 | 381 | 16 | 188 | 8 | 193 | 8 | 1,906 | 84 |
| Male heads .. | 792 | 100 | 153 | 19 | 99 | 12 | 54 | 7 | 639 | 81 |
| Other males ... | 338 | 100 | 114 | 33 | 65 | 19 | 49 | 14 | 224 | 67 |
| Females | 1,157 | 100 | 114 | 10 | 24 | 2 | 90 | 8 | 1,043 | 90 |

*Persons available for work are divided into two groups: (1) Those who were actively looking for work during the week prior to the interview, and (2) those who had not looked for work during the week but who were available for employment if the right opportunity presented itself.

**Data in regard to people not available for work are included in many tables as a standard for comparison.

TABLE 5. CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND
OVER, BY SEX, POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, AND AVAILABILITY FOR WORK,
UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| SEX, POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD AND AVAILABILITY | PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OLDER | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------|-----------|------|--------------|------|
| | TOTAL | | EMPLOYED* | | NOT EMPLOYED | |
| | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| Available for work | 381 | 100 | 164 | 43 | 217 | 57 |
| Actively looking | 188 | 100 | 74 | 39 | 114 | 61 |
| Male heads | 99 | 100 | 48 | 48 | 51 | 52 |
| Other males | 65 | 100 | 22 | 34 | 43 | 66 |
| Females | 24 | 100 | 4 | 17 | 20 | 83 |
| Not actively looking | 193 | 100 | 90 | 47 | 103 | 53 |
| Male heads | 54 | 100 | 42 | 78 | 12 | 22 |
| Other males | 49 | 100 | 26 | 53 | 23 | 47 |
| Females | 90 | 100 | 22 | 24 | 68 | 76 |
| Not available | 1,906 | 100 | 1,025 | 54 | 881 | 46 |
| Male heads | 639 | 100 | 548 | 86 | 91 | 14 |
| Other males | 224 | 100 | 144 | 64 | 80 | 36 |
| Females | 1,043 | 100 | 333 | 32 | 710 | 68 |

*A person was considered to be employed if he reported having a job "last week" (that is, the week prior to the interview).

The approach was dictated by circumstances more or less peculiar to the area. With increased interest at all levels in greater industrial development in the Valley and the State, and with the existing high levels of underemployment, the need for such information seemed all-important. Mere knowledge of the number and the characteristics of the unemployed was not considered adequate for employers who contemplated expansion or new industrial development. To meet the needs of these and other segments of the population, an appraisal of the potential labor supply seemed mandatory.

As is shown in Table 1, about 16 per cent of the total population in the sample (14 years of age and over) were actively looking for work or available but not looking. As the sample used in this study is reasonably representative, some 16 per cent of the open-country population 14 years of age and over in the Upper Monongahela Valley might be considered potentially employable, as of July 1951.³⁸ Approximately half of these individuals were actively looking for work.³⁹

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

An individual's economic well-being and his readiness to accept employment are affected by many factors, among them household responsibilities, sex, age, and current employment status. The latter would appear to be of particular importance. In this instance many individuals reported having jobs during the week prior to the interview (Table 5). Almost half of those available had some kind of job during this week. As might be expected, male heads of households were more likely to be employed than the others because of greater responsibilities and the reluctance of many employers to discharge men with families.

Superficially, it might appear from Table 5 that the gravity of the current employment situation is less acute than might otherwise be expected. Such a conclusion, however, is not justified. Many of the jobs held during the week prior to the interview may have been part-time jobs, or jobs with very low remuneration. Direct evidence on this point is lacking. However, an analysis of the employment history of these persons during the previous 12 months suggests that this may have been the case.

As indicated below, more than two-fifths of the 71 persons who had some work during the survey week, and who were also actively looking for work, had been employed for less than 100 days during the previous 12 months. Almost four-fifths of them had worked for less than 200 days.

| Work days | Percentage reporting |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Under 100 | 42 |
| 100-199 | 36 |
| 200 and over | 22 |
| | — |
| | 100 |

Furthermore, other evidence suggests a marginal income status for many of these persons who were employed and actively looking for work during the week prior to the interview. In indicating their major

³⁸ The sample was designed to exclude both urban people and those living in small rural communities.

³⁹ Some of those classified here as 'looking for work' reported having a job during the week prior to the interview (see Table 5).

activity⁴⁰ during the previous 12 months, almost two-fifths of them reported an activity for which they received no direct compensation. Many had been actively looking for work during most of the 12-month period.

SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS

Availability for employment is affected by the individual's sex and position in the household. As heads of households may have several dependents, their unemployment or underemployment is likely to be more serious than is true of other persons. This factor would affect availability for employment. Therefore 1 male head in 5 was potentially available for employment at the time of interview. More than 1 in 10 were actively looking for work.

The proportion of other males in the sample who were available for work was significantly greater than in the case of male heads of households.⁴¹ One-third of them were reported as available for employment (Table 4). As for females, only 10 per cent were available for work, and few were actively looking for work.

Proportionately more male heads of households were actively looking for work than were in the total sample population, 53 per cent as compared to 35 per cent (Table 6). However, male heads of households

TABLE 6. SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1951

| SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS | AVAILABILITY FOR WORK | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|---------------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----|
| | TOTAL | | AVAILABLE | | | | NOT AVAILABLE FOR WORK | |
| | | | ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | | |
| | | | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | | |
| All persons | 2,287 | 100 | 188 | 100 | 193 | 100 | 1,903 | 100 |
| Male heads | 792 | 35 | 99 | 53 | 54 | 28 | 693 | 31 |
| Other males | 338 | 15 | 65 | 34 | 49 | 25 | 274 | 12 |
| Females | 1,157 | 50 | 24 | 13 | 90 | 47 | 1,043 | 55 |

were underrepresented among those who were available but were not actively looking for work. Less than 3 in 10 of the people in this group were male heads of households. This suggests that heads of households,

⁴⁰The determination of "major activity" was based on the following question in the schedule: "What did you do most of the last 12 months?" A checklist was used to suggest the range of possibilities.

⁴¹The significance of all percentage or numerical differences specifically mentioned in the text of this report has been determined statistically. For the purpose of this report, significance is limited to the so-called "5 per cent level," or better. This means that the event being measured (i.e., a difference between two percentages) must be such that the statistical probability of its occurrence because of chance alone is no greater than 1 in 20. Wherever a difference is indicated in a table but not commented on in the text, the reader is cautioned against assuming that the difference is more than a chance relationship. Statistical procedures include chi square analysis and other procedures to be developed in the following texts: F. E. Croxon and L. J. Cowden, *Applied Group Statistics*, N.Y.: Prentice-Hall, 1946, p. 337, and F. A. Pearson, and K. R. Bennett, *Statistical Methods*, N.Y.: Wiley & Sons, 1942, p. 313.

from necessity and a sense of greater responsibility, may tend either to look actively for work, or to resign themselves to the jobs they currently hold.

In any event, it is shown in Table 6 that other males and females feel somewhat freer to be more "passive" in their search for a job. Proportionately more other males were in the inactive group than were in the sample population as a whole; whereas male heads of households were underrepresented. As for females, the proportion, in the inactive group and in the sample were approximately equal.

AGE

Approximately 40 per cent of all persons available for work were under 25 years of age. This percentage was high because of the large number of other males and females who were in this young age group. More than three-fourths of the other males and more than half of the females were less than 25 years of age. A majority of the male heads were between 25 and 45 years of age (Table 7).

The age composition of these people is also important in another connection. The proportion of persons available for work is not "padded" with people too old to work. Only 20 per cent of those available for work were more than 45 years of age.

TIME SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK

One practicable index of the seriousness of the 1951 employment crisis involves the number of weeks individuals spent looking for work. Table 8 indicates that a majority of those actively looking for work had been seeking employment for 11 weeks or more. Many individuals had been looking for more than 26 weeks.

The amount of time spent looking for work varied somewhat according to household responsibilities and sex. Male heads, on the average, had sought work for longer periods of time than other males and females.⁴² This may be partly accounted for on several grounds. First, proportionately more heads were employed during the week prior to the interview (Tables 5 and 10). With their family responsibilities, those individuals might therefore be somewhat more discriminating in their appraisal of new employment opportunities. This would be particularly true for those whose employment at the time of the interview was reasonably remunerative. Another factor of some importance is age. As previously shown (Table 7), male heads of households were usually older than either other males or females. This would tend to make the change to a new job, if already employed, more difficult. It might actually

⁴²The percentage of each household-sex grouping looking for 11 weeks or more is as follows: male head—66 per cent; other males—46 per cent; and females—29 per cent.

TABLE 7. AGE OF PERSONS AVAILABLE AND NOT AVAILABLE FOR WORK,
BY SEX AND POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY,
WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| AVAILABILITY AND AGE | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | ALL PERSONS | MALE HEADS | OTHER MALES | FEMALES |
| | <i>Number</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Number</i> |
| All persons | 2,287 | 792 | 338 | 1,157 |
| Persons available for work | 381 | 153 | 114 | 114 |
| Actively looking | 188 | 99 | 65 | 24 |
| Not actively looking | 193 | 54 | 49 | 90 |
| Persons not available | 1,906 | 639 | 224 | 1,043 |
| | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
| Persons available for work | | | | |
| Persons actively looking | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 14-24 | 39 | 10 | 74 | 63 |
| 25-44 | 37 | 49 | 23 | 29 |
| 45 and over | 24 | 41 | 3 | 8 |
| Persons not actively looking .. | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 14-24 | 39 | 1 | 80 | 41 |
| 25-44 | 44 | 60 | 16 | 49 |
| 45 and over | 17 | 36 | 4 | 10 |
| Persons not available | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 14-24 | 29 | 1 | 70 | 20 |
| 25-44 | 52 | 41 | 14 | 39 |
| 45 and over | 28 | 58 | 16 | 41 |

TABLE 8. LENGTH OF TIME SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK, BY SEX OF
WORKER AND POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY,
JULY 1954

| TIME SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK (IN WEEKS) | HOUSEHOLD POSITION AND SEX | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | TOTAL | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | |
| | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> |
| All persons | | | | | | | | |
| looking | 188 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 65 | 100 | 24 | 100 |
| 0-13 weeks .. | 86 | 46 | 34 | 34 | 35 | 54 | 17 | 71 |
| 14-26 weeks .. | 65 | 34 | 41 | 42 | 29 | 35 | 4 | 14 |
| 27 and over weeks .. | 37 | 20 | 24 | 24 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 25 |

constitute a barrier against employment in certain industries or by particular employers. This would be especially true for those who were 50 and over.

The number of females involved is too small to permit much generalization. It seems evident, however, that relatively few females had been looking for work for more than 13 weeks. This may also be accounted for in terms of age and responsibilities. Few of the females

TABLE 9. NUMBER OF WEEKS THAT PERSONS HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR WORK, BY SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION, AND AGE, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1951

| SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION, AND AGE GROUP | PERSONS 14 AND OVER | | WEEKS SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK | | | |
|---|------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|-------------|------|
| | Number | Pct. | 0-26 | | 27 AND OVER | |
| | | | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| All persons | 188 | 100 | 151 | 80 | 37 | 20 |
| 14-34 | 111 | 100 | 98 | 88 | 16 | 14 |
| 35-54 | 51 | 100 | 40 | 74 | 14 | 26 |
| 55 and over | 20 | 100 | 13 | 65 | 7 | 35 |
| Male heads | 99 | 100 | 75 | 76 | 24 | 24 |
| 14-34 | 35 | 100 | 29 | 83 | 6 | 17 |
| 35-54 | 45 | 100 | 34 | 76 | 11 | 24 |
| 55 and over | 19 | 100 | 12 | 63 | 7 | 37 |
| Other males | 65 | 100 | 58 | 89 | 7 | 11 |
| 14-34 | 58 | 100 | 53 | 91 | 5 | 9 |
| 35-54 | 7 | 100 | 5 | | 2 | .... |
| 55 and over | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | .... |
| Females | 24 | 100 | 18 | 75 | 6 | 25 |
| 14-34 | 21 | 100 | 16 | 76 | 5 | 24 |
| 35-54 | 2 | 100 | 1 | | 1 | .... |
| 55 and over | 1 | 100 | 1 | | 0 | .... |

TABLE 10. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK, BY SEX, POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, AND WEEKS SPENT IN LOOKING FOR WORK, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1951

| SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION, AND WEEKS OF LOOKING FOR WORK | TOTAL PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK | | EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS 14 AND OVER* | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------|--|------|--------------|------|
| | Number | Pct. | EMPLOYED | | NOT EMPLOYED | |
| | | | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| All persons | 188 | 100 | 74 | 100 | 111 | 100 |
| 0-26 | 151 | 80 | 55 | 74 | 96 | 84 |
| 27 and over | 37 | 20 | 19 | 26 | 18 | 16 |
| Male heads | 99 | 100 | 48 | 100 | 51 | 100 |
| 0-26 | 75 | 76 | 32 | 67 | 43 | 84 |
| 27 and over | 24 | 24 | 16 | 33 | 8 | 16 |
| Other males | 65 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 43 | 100 |
| 0-26 | 58 | 89 | 20 | 91 | 38 | 85 |
| 27 and over | 7 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 12 |
| Females | 24 | 100 | 4 | 100 | 20 | 100 |
| 0-26 | 18 | 75 | 3 | | 15 | 75 |
| 27 and over | 6 | 25 | 1 | | 5 | 25 |

*Employed persons were those holding a job the week prior to interview.

looking for work were over 34 years of age. Because of homemaking and family responsibilities, relatively few older rural females would be expected to be actively seeking work.

There is a positive relationship between age and amount of time spent looking for work (Table 9). Among male heads of households, for example, the percentage of those 55 and over who had been looking for work for more than 6 months was greater than for those 14 to 34 years of age. In other words, the proportion of heads of households who

reported seeking work for more than 26 weeks increased as the age of the individuals increased. Because of the limited number of other males and females in the older age brackets, this relationship cannot be shown for these two groups.⁴³

Among those available for work, those who had some employment during the survey week actually had been looking for work for a longer time than those who had had no work during the week in question. Although a third of the employed male heads of households had looked for work for 6 months or more, only 16 per cent of those not employed during the survey week had looked for a comparable period of time (Table 10). This suggests that a worker's employment status does not necessarily indicate his interest in seeking employment.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION STATUS

Under the West Virginia Unemployment Compensation Law,⁴⁴ insured workers are entitled to received unemployment compensation when unemployed.⁴⁵ Weekly benefits are paid for 24 weeks. The amount received depends on earnings during a previous period. During the 1954-55 employment crisis, many workers applied for and received the maximum benefits. Although this program helped many through a period of economic stress, it did not benefit those who were ineligible. In addition, many of the insured workers exhausted their claims for compensation before finding new employment. For both of these groups, therefore, the decline in employment opportunities in the Valley and the State has been distressing.

Among those persons who were actively looking for work in July 1954, almost half had not applied for compensation (Table 11). In some instances, as previously suggested, some were employed, adequately or otherwise, at that time. Others were coming into the labor market for the first time. Still others were not entitled to compensation because the industry in which they had been working was not covered by unemployment insurance. One or more of these conditions would probably account for the noticeable difference in the percentages of male heads and other males, or the percentages of male heads and females, who had not applied. It is probable that many of the females and other males were looking for their first job.

For those persons who had applied, a majority were drawing compensation when they were interviewed. Close to one-fifth of those who had applied, however, had already drawn their final payments. A small number (7 per cent) reported having an unexpended balance of un-

⁴³The relationship, however, probably exists for both other male and females.

⁴⁴Chapter 21-A, *Code of West Virginia*.

⁴⁵For details, see: West Virginia Department of Employment Security, *Unemployment Compensation for West Virginians*, June 1953.

TABLE 11. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION STATUS OF PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK, BY SEX, AND POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1951

| UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION STATUS* | PERSONS 11 AND OVER | | SEX AND POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-------------|------|---------|------|
| | | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | |
| | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| All persons | 188 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 65 | 100 | 24 | 100 |
| Did not apply for compen- sation | 86 | 46 | 26 | 26 | 42 | 65 | 18 | 75 |
| Applied for compensa- tion | 102 | 54 | 73 | 74 | 23 | 35 | 6 | 25 |
| Status of those who applied: | | | | | | | | |
| All persons: | 102 | 100 | 73 | 100 | 23 | 100 | 6 | 100 |
| No compen- sation** | 18 | 18 | 12 | 16 | 1 | 17 | 2 | .... |
| Still drawing: | 59 | 57 | 43 | 59 | 13 | 57 | 3 | .... |
| Partial pay- ment | 7 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 1 | — |
| Full payment | 18 | 18 | 13 | 18 | 5 | 22 | 0 | .... |

*See text for discussion of unemployment compensation.

**These individuals were either ineligible, or were being processed for compensation at a later date.

employment benefits. This resulted from reemployment before their claims terminated.

Work Preferences

TYPE OF JOB PREFERRED: FARM OR NONFARM

The type of work preferred by those available for work should be of interest to both potential employers and Employment Service officials. For this reason all persons in the sample who were available in July 1951 were asked a number of questions concerning the type of job preferred. Several conclusions may be drawn from their answers.

Relatively few persons had a preference for farmwork, on either a part-time or a full-time basis (Table 12). This was particularly true of females.

The majority who preferred nonfarmwork were inclined to favor full-time work. This was true for all workers, irrespective of sex, household status, or extent of activity in looking for work. There were differences in degree, however, from group to group. Among females, for example, approximately a third preferred part-time nonfarm work.

Willingness to Work Away from Home

An additional aspect of importance in connection with work preferences is the potential mobility of the labor force. In a state such

TABLE 12. PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK WHO PREFERRED FARM OR NONFARM EMPLOYMENT, BY SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| PREFERENCE | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | |
| | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Pct.</i> |
| Persons available for work* | 381 | 100 | 153 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 114 | 100 |
| Prefer farmwork | 33 | 9 | 14 | 9 | 16 | 13 | 3 | 3 |
| Prefer nonfarmwork | 344 | 90 | 136 | 90 | 97 | 87 | 111 | 97 |

*Four persons did not report job preference.

as West Virginia, where the pressure of the population on existing resources is relatively great, labor mobility is very important. An expression of willingness to move away from home to do nonfarm work is a useful index of mobility potentials.

Except for females, most of those who were actively looking for nonfarm work during July 1954 were favorably disposed to moving away from the family to do such work (Table 13).⁴⁶ Considering close family ties of rural people generally, plus a frequently expressed attachment to the local area, this reaction is significant. Many West Virginians live and work away from home. In many instances they commute long distances on week-ends and on other occasions.⁴⁷

It is also apparent that male heads of households who were not actively looking for work were much less willing to live and work away from home than were those who were looking for work. This may be associated with the fact that a high percentage of them already had some type of employment (Table 5).

AGE AND POTENTIAL MOBILITY

Age, in itself, was not significantly related to willingness to leave home. However, marked differences appeared when this factor was combined with household status. Male heads of households under 35 years of age were much less willing to leave home than were other males of the same age. This may well be because many of the families in this age group were relatively young.

Among females, only 10 per cent were willing to leave home. However, those in the youngest age group were much more willing to leave than those in the older groups. This finding is corroborated by the

⁴⁶The reader should note that Tables 13-14 include only those persons who preferred nonfarm work.

⁴⁷See Table 18.

TABLE 13. WILLINGNESS OF PERSONS WHO PREFERRED NONFARM WORK TO LEAVE HOME TO WORK, BY SEX, HOUSEHOLD STATUS, AGE, EDUCATION, MAJOR SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME, AND LEVEL OF LIVING, UPPER MONONGAHIA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| GROUP | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | | ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK | | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | |
| | TOTAL | | WILLING TO LEAVE HOME | TOTAL | | WILLING TO LEAVE HOME | TOTAL | | WILLING TO LEAVE HOME |
| | Number | Number | Pct. | Number | Number | Pct. | Number | Number | Pct. |
| All persons | 344 | 219 | 64 | 173 | 129 | 75 | 171 | 90 | 53 |
| Household status: | | | | | | | | | |
| Male heads | 136 | 93 | 68 | 90 | 68 | 76 | 16 | 25 | 54 |
| Other males | 97 | 81 | 81 | 59 | 51 | 86 | 38 | 30 | 79 |
| Females | 111 | 45 | 41 | 24 | 10 | 42 | 87 | 35 | 40 |
| Age: | | | | | | | | | |
| 14-34 | 214 | 140 | 65 | 104 | 75 | 72 | 110 | 65 | 59 |
| 35-54 | 91 | 56 | 62 | 49 | 40 | 82 | 42 | 16 | 38 |
| 55 and over | 39 | 23 | 59 | 20 | 14 | 70 | 19 | 9 | 47 |
| Years of schooling:* | | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 8 | 76 | 50 | 66 | 42 | 34 | 81 | 34 | 16 | 47 |
| 8-11 | 129 | 77 | 60 | 72 | 52 | 72 | 57 | 25 | 44 |
| 12 and over | 48 | 21 | 44 | 23 | 14 | 61 | 25 | 7 | 28 |
| Major source of household income:** | | | | | | | | | |
| Nonfarm work | 255 | 168 | 66 | 124 | 95 | 77 | 131 | 73 | 56 |
| Nonwork | 55 | 31 | 56 | 35 | 25 | 71 | 20 | 6 | 30 |
| Level of living: | | | | | | | | | |
| Upper | 79 | 43 | 54 | 33 | 20 | 61 | 46 | 23 | 50 |
| Middle | 140 | 90 | 64 | 69 | 53 | 77 | 71 | 37 | 52 |
| Lower | 125 | 86 | 69 | 71 | 56 | 79 | 54 | 30 | 56 |

*Of persons 20 years old and over.

**Does not include 14 persons, 10 of whom were in households in which agriculture was the major source of income. See footnote 50 for classification of households by major source of income.

results of many migration studies. Young women, particularly those between 15 and 25 years of age, are usually the most mobile, at least in rural to urban migration.¹⁸

EDUCATION AND POTENTIAL MOBILITY

An analysis of the educational backgrounds of those in the sample indicates that persons with the most education were less willing to leave home to do nonfarm work.¹⁹ This may be due to the fact that those with a high-school education or better had more at stake in their local communities.

¹⁸ See J. Louis Smith, *The Sociology of Rural Life* (Third Edition, N.Y.: Harpers, 1953).

¹⁹ The pattern described here should be differentiated from that involving rural-to-urban migration related to education. For data on the latter, see J. H. Kolb, E. deS. Brunner, *Rural Migration* (3rd Edition, N.Y.: Holt Rinehart and Co., 1952), p. 31.

MAJOR SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND POTENTIAL MOBILITY

All households were classified by chief source of income into three major type categories—Farmwork, nonfarm work, and nonwork.⁵⁰ Eighty per cent of the persons available for work who preferred nonfarm work came from households where nonfarm work provided the major source of income.

People from nonwork households were less willing to leave home than were those in other households. This was especially true for those who were available for work but not actively looking for it. Only 30 per cent of these persons were willing to leave home to do nonfarm work. This may be due to the fact that some of these nonwork households involved retired persons, or persons permanently dependent on nonwork sources of income, such as relief. Such persons would stand to gain very little by leaving home. Their need is for local employment.

LEVEL OF LIVING AND POTENTIAL MOBILITY

Before discussing level of living as a factor in connection with mobility, it is important to understand its composition and significance. Fundamentally, the level of living of any social group is the way in which it lives and the items, tangible and intangible, which it consumes. In measuring level of living, various types of indexes are used, similar to the one designed for this study.⁵¹ These indexes are useful in suggesting how well people live, considering the cultural standards in vogue at the particular time and place. No useful index can include all of the many consumption items that may be included in a family's living. To be functional, a limited number of items must be selected to reflect as closely as possible the way of life of the group studied. Obviously, so far as it measures the level of consumption of purchaseable goods and services, the level of living is a reflection of income, to a greater or lesser degree. It is also, however, an indication of the group's standards and values.⁵²

A relatively small number (23 per cent) of those available for work reported high levels of living. People with high levels of living were

⁵⁰Farmwork households included those where income came chiefly from farm operation, and or farm wage work. Nonfarmwork households were those in which most of the household income came from nonfarm wages, salaries, professional fees, business profits, or other nonfarm activities. Nonwork households were those receiving most of the total income from miscellaneous nonwork sources, such as rent, interest, royalties, unemployment insurance, Social Security, Public Assistance grants, and pensions.

⁵¹The following equally weighted items were included in the index: Electric lights, water piped into house, refrigerator, deep-freeze or frozen-food locker, power washing machine, automobile or truck, flush toilet, kitchen sink, telephone, and daily newspaper. With possession of each item equal to 1 point, the maximum total score was 10 points. In arriving at the three-way level of living classification ("Upper," "Middle," "Lower") all households in the sample as a whole were divided into three nearly equal parts, with the "breaks" occurring as follows: 10-8, 7-5, 4-1. For a discussion of level of living and level of living indexes, see: J. C. Belcher and E. F. Sharp, *A Short Scale for Measuring Farm Family Level of Living*, . . . Oklahoma A.E.S. Technical Bul. No. T-16, Stillwater, 1952.

⁵²For example, individuals in different social groups may have different "levels of living" despite equal income.

less willing to leave home to do nonfarm work than were those with lower levels of living (Table 13). About half of those in the "upper level of living group were willing to leave home as compared with more than two-thirds of those in the "lower" group. This suggests that high levels of living, as measured in this study, act as a deterrent to mobility.

Potential Mobility of Family Units

The discussion up to this point has been focused around the willingness of heads and nonheads to leave home in order to do nonfarm work. A situation that involves potential mobility, however, has not been considered. This is the movement of the whole family to a new location. This latter type of movement has different implications from the former. On economic, psychological, and sociological grounds, the migration of an entire group of persons in many instances, is more momentous. For this reason, all male heads looking for or available for work were asked whether or not they would move their families away to do nonfarm work.

AGE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD AND FAMILY MOBILITY

With respect to age, the younger heads of households who were actively looking for work were more willing to move their families than those in the older age groups (Table 14). This is in sharp contrast to the reaction of male heads of households toward leaving home alone to do nonfarm work. In the latter connection, it was apparent that the younger male heads of households may have objected somewhat more than the older ones to leaving home without their families. The fact that the older men were less willing to move their families suggests that the uprooting of long-established households, many of them with grown children and strong community ties, is a deterrent to migration.

LEVEL OF LIVING AND FAMILY MOBILITY

The effect of high levels of living on willingness to move away from home was noted in connection with Table 13. Much the same relationship holds true in the case of family mobility. Male heads of households with relatively high levels of living were less willing to move their families than were those with low levels of living (Table 14).

MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME AND FAMILY MOBILITY

With respect to source of household income, a preponderance of nonwork income may act as a deterrent to family mobility. Heads of nonwork households were less willing to move their families than were those in nonfarmwork households.

TABLE 14. WILLINGNESS OF MALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO PREFERRED NONFARM WORK, TO MOVE FAMILY TO DO NONFARM WORK, BY AGE, EDUCATION, MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME, AND LEVEL OF LIVING, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| SPECIFIED CHARACTERISTICS | MALE HEADS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| | ALL MALE HEADS | | | ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK | | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | |
| | TOTAL | | WILLING TO MOVE FAMILY | TOTAL | | WILLING TO MOVE FAMILY | TOTAL | | WILLING TO MOVE FAMILY |
| | Number | Number Pct. | | Number | Number Pct. | | Number | Number Pct. | |
| All male heads .. | 136 | 101 74 | | 90 | 66 73 | | 46 | 35 76 | |
| Age: | | | | | | | | | |
| 14-34 | 46 | 40 87 | | 31 | 28 90 | | 15 | 12 | |
| 35-54 | 58 | 42 72 | | 40 | 29 72 | | 18 | 13 | |
| 55 and over | 32 | 19 59 | | 19 | 9 47 | | 13 | 10 | |
| Years of schooling:* | | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 8 | 49 | 32 65 | | 32 | 21 66 | | 17 | 11 | |
| 8-11 | 69 | 57 83 | | 46 | 37 80 | | 23 | 20 87 | |
| 12 and over | 16 | 10 63 | | 11 | 7 .. | | 5 | 3 .. | |
| Major source of household income:** | | | | | | | | | |
| Nonfarm work | 87 | 79 91 | | 52 | 52 100 | | 35 | 27 77 | |
| Nonwork | 32 | 13 41 | | 28 | 10 36 | | 4 | 3 .. | |
| Level of living:*** | | | | | | | | | |
| Upper | 25 | 13 52 | | 19 | 10 53 | | 6 | 3 .. | |
| Middle | 61 | 46 75 | | 40 | 32 80 | | 21 | 14 67 | |
| Lower | 50 | 42 84 | | 31 | 24 77 | | 19 | 18 95 | |

*Includes only those 20 years old and over.

**See footnote 50 for definition of sources.

***See text for discussion of levels of living.

EDUCATION OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD AND FAMILY MOBILITY

Heads with low levels of education were less willing to move their families than were the better educated. Sixty-five per cent of those with less than 8 years of schooling were willing to move, as compared with 79 per cent of those with 8 or more years of schooling.

As indicated earlier, people with the most education were unwilling to leave their families to go away to work. The data in Table 11 indicated, however, that these people were often willing to leave with their families.

Vocational Training

GENERAL

The sources and types of training of persons available for work is a matter of concern to both potential employers and those primarily interested in the placement of such persons. If training is defined as a more or less organized process of education along specialized vocational

TABLE 15. VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BY SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION, AND AVAILABILITY, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954.

| AVAILABILITY, SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| | ALL PERSONS | NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE WITH TRAINING* | |
| | Number | Number | Per cent |
| All persons available | 384 | 59 | 15 |
| Male heads | 153 | 23 | 15 |
| Other males | 114 | 23 | 20 |
| Females | 114 | 13 | 11 |
| Actively looking: | 188 | 24 | 13 |
| Male heads | 99 | 12 | 12 |
| Other males | 65 | 8 | 12 |
| Females | 24 | 4 | 17 |
| Not actively looking: | 193 | 35 | 18 |
| Male heads | 54 | 11 | 20 |
| Other males | 19 | 15 | 31 |
| Females | 90 | 9 | 10 |

*Persons "with training" were those who reported some kind of vocational training between June 1946 and date of interview.

TABLE 16. VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BY SEX AND POSITION IN HOUSEHOLD, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| TRAINING,* | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | |
| | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Persons with training | 59 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 35 | 100 |
| Type of training: | | | | | | |
| Mechanical | 12 | 20 | 6 | 25 | 6 | 17 |
| Industrial | 8 | 15 | 4 | 17 | 4 | 11 |
| Commercial | 12 | 20 | 3 | 12 | 9 | 27 |
| Handicraft | 6 | 10 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 11 |
| Agricultural | 12 | 20 | 5 | 21 | 7 | 20 |
| Other | 9 | 15 | 4 | 17 | 5 | 14 |
| Source of training: | | | | | | |
| Armed forces | 6 | 10 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 11 |
| Girl | 14 | 24 | 7 | 29 | 7 | 20 |
| On-the-job | 6 | 10 | 5 | 21 | 1 | 3 |
| High school | 26 | 44 | 7 | 29 | 19 | 54 |
| Other schools | 7 | 12 | 3 | 12 | 4 | 12 |

*Persons "with training" were those who reported some kind of vocational training between June 1946 and date of interview.

lines, it is evident that relatively few had received any training in recent years. (Table 15.)

TYPE AND SOURCE OF TRAINING

Many types of training were mentioned by those available for work. Mechanical, commercial, and agricultural training were most frequently mentioned (Table 16).

The question on which the conclusion was based referred to the period between June 1946 and the time of interview.

The two chief sources of training were high-school vocational courses and G.I. training programs for veterans. High-school vocational courses were particularly important.

Work Experience

MAJOR ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

An analysis of the chief activities of persons from June 1953 to June 1954 provides a reasonably clear picture of what they were doing most of the time during the 12-month period. It is used here as a preface, in a sense, to set the stage for a consideration of actual work experience.

Nonfarm work was the major activity for most persons, with almost two-thirds of the household heads so engaged (Table 17). The chief

TABLE 17. MAJOR ACTIVITY DURING PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS, OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BY SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION, AND AVAILABILITY FOR WORK, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| AVAILABILITY AND MAJOR ACTIVITY | PERSONS AVAILABLE | | SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|------|----------------------------|------|-------------|------|---------|------|
| | | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | |
| | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| All persons available | 381 | 100 | 153 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 114 | 100 |
| Farm work* | 31 | 8 | 23 | 15 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Nonfarm work | 135 | 35 | 93 | 62 | 31 | 27 | 11 | 10 |
| Looking for work | 50 | 13 | 25 | 16 | 22 | 19 | 3 | 3 |
| Going to school | 68 | 18 | 0 | | 39 | 34 | 29 | 25 |
| Keeping house | 66 | 17 | 0 | | 1 | 1 | 65 | 57 |
| Armed forces | 14 | 4 | 0 | | 12 | 11 | 0 | |
| Other | 17 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| Available persons | 381 | .. | 153 | | 114 | | 114 | |
| Actively looking | 188 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 65 | 100 | 24 | 100 |
| Farm work* | 16 | 9 | 13 | 13 | 3 | 5 | 0 | |
| Nonfarm work | 78 | 41 | 59 | 60 | 17 | 26 | 2 | 8 |
| Looking for work .. | 14 | 23 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 32 | 2 | 8 |
| Going to school .. | 22 | 12 | 0 | | 14 | 21 | 8 | 31 |
| Keeping house ... | 12 | 6 | 0 | | 0 | | 12 | 50 |
| Armed forces .. | 11 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 14 | 0 | |
| Other | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | |
| Not actively looking .. | 193 | 100 | 54 | 100 | 49 | 100 | 90 | 100 |
| Farm work* | 15 | 8 | 10 | 19 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| Nonfarm work | 57 | 29 | 34 | 63 | 11 | 29 | 9 | 10 |
| Looking for work .. | 6 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Going to school .. | 46 | 24 | 0 | | 25 | 51 | 21 | 23 |
| Keeping house .. | 51 | 28 | 0 | | 1 | 2 | 53 | 59 |
| Armed forces .. | 3 | 2 | 0 | | 3 | 6 | 0 | |
| Other | 12 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 |

*"Farm work" includes operation, unpaid family work, and farm wage work.

activity for females was homemaking. The proportion in this instance may seem excessive, in view of the fact that these women were supposedly looking for work. However, it is probable that women would report

homemaking as their major activity even though they had spent considerable time looking for work.⁵⁴

Many of those available for work said they looked for work most of the time during the previous 12-month period. This appeared to be particularly true among other males, about a third of whom reported this as their major activity during the year.

Finally, going to school was an important activity for some, and particularly for other males and females. A high proportion of the people in both of these groups were under 20 years of age (Table 7).

Those who were actively looking and those who were merely available for work reported somewhat different major activities. A much larger proportion of the former, for example, reported looking for work as their chief activity during the year. Likewise, more of them reported nonfarm work. Fewer of them were in school.

Only a minority of those available for work had been gainfully employed for most of the year. This holds true even if unpaid family workers are included.

WORK EXPERIENCE AWAY FROM HOME

The fact that many West Virginians work away from home was pointed out earlier in this report. More than two-thirds of those actively looking for work in July 1951 reported having had some nonfarm employment during the previous 12 months (Table 19). Approximately two-fifths of those merely available for work reported likewise. Close to 1 in 5 persons, in each instance, worked away from home for at least part of the year (Table 18). On the whole, those available for work were more likely to have worked away from home than those who were neither looking nor available for work.⁵⁵

Male heads of households did not work away from home to the same extent as other males and females. This fact is not necessarily inconsistent with their possibly greater incentive for work. Having families and owning real estate, as many of them do, would tend to restrict their mobility.

WORK EXPERIENCE DURING THE YEAR

The inherent difference between people who were actively looking and those who were merely available is evident in Table 19. Whereas one-fifth of the active group reported no work at all during the year of record, two-fifths of those who were less active had performed no work.

⁵⁴The percentage of female-looking for work who reported homemaking as their major activity was significantly less than that of females neither looking nor available for work.

⁵⁵The not looking and not available category consist of all those in the sample who reported they were neither looking nor available for work at the time of interview. The group would therefore include those who were satisfied with the job they held, and those who were not in the labor force for one or another reason. Among those in this category who were employed, 77 per cent worked 250 days or more during the year of record.

TABLE 18. PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK WHO HAD DONE NONFARM WORK AWAY FROM HOME DURING THE PRECEDING 12 MONTHS, BY SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STATUS, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| HOUSEHOLD STATUS | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK WHO HAD WORKED AWAY FROM HOME | | | | | | | | | PERSONS NOT AVAILABLE | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------|------|---------------------------|----------------|------|-------------------------------|----------------|------|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | | THOSE ACTIVELY LOOKING | | | THOSE NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | | | | |
| | TOTAL | WORKED AWAY | | TOTAL | WORKED AWAY | | TOTAL | WORKED AWAY | | TOTAL | WORKED AWAY | |
| | | No. | Pct. | | No. | Pct. | | No. | Pct. | | No. | Pct. |
| If persons.. | 210 | 43 | 20 | 129 | 25 | 19 | 81 | 18 | 22 | 658 | 66 | 10 |
| Male | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| heads .. | 132 | 18 | 14 | 88 | 13 | 15 | 44 | 5 | 11 | 448 | 40 | 9 |
| Other | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| males .. | 48 | 15 | 31 | 31 | 9 | 29 | 17 | 6 | ... | 70 | 7 | 10 |
| females | 30 | 10 | 33 | 10 | 3 | .... | 20 | 7 | 35 | 140 | 19 | 14 |

TABLE 19. TYPE OF WORK DONE DURING PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BY SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| AVAILABILITY, TYPE OF WORK DONE | SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------|------------|------|-------------|------|---------|------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | |
| | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. | Number | Pct. |
| If persons available for work .. | 381 | 100 | 153 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 114 | 100 |
| No work | 118 | 31 | 10 | 7 | 38 | 33 | 70 | 61 |
| Farm work only | 53 | 14 | 11 | 7 | 28 | 25 | 14 | 12 |
| Nonfarm work only | 150 | 39 | 90 | 59 | 31 | 27 | 29 | 26 |
| Both farm and nonfarm work | 60 | 16 | 42 | 27 | 17 | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| Persons actively looking .. | 188 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 65 | 100 | 24 | 100 |
| No work | 39 | 21 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 32 | 13 | 54 |
| Farm work only | 20 | 11 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 20 | 1 | 4 |
| Nonfarm work only | 91 | 48 | 62 | 63 | 26 | 31 | 9 | 38 |
| Both farm and nonfarm work | 38 | 20 | 26 | 26 | 11 | 17 | 1 | 4 |

Among those available for work, a relatively small number reported nonfarm work only.⁵⁶ By far the most important segment of this group consisted of other males, many of whom worked as unpaid family workers.

In view of the role of agriculture in the Upper Monongahela Valley, it is not surprising to find high proportions of those available for work exclusively employed at nonfarm work (Table 19). This was somewhat more true of those actively looking, almost half of whom reported nonfarm work only.

DAYS WORKED DURING THE YEAR

It was previously pointed out that employment during the survey week was not a reliable index of the need for employment among those

⁵⁶Farmwork, in this instance, includes operating a farm, working for wage, and unpaid family labor.

available for work.* Almost three-fifths of those actively looking and almost half of those who were merely available worked less than 200 days during the year in question (Table 20). A majority of persons reported nonfarm work as their chief type of employment during the 12-month period. Relatively few had engaged in farmwork. Of those who had, most had served as unpaid family workers. This type of farmwork ordinarily is inefficient and unproductive. It constitutes a transitional stage toward more regular employment.

TABLE 20. PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK WHO WORKED A STATED NUMBER OF DAYS DURING THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS AND ENGAGED IN STATED TYPES OF WORK, BY SEX AND HOUSEHOLD POSITION, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| DAYS WORKED AND TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT | ALL PERSONS | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | ACTIVELY LOOKING | | | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING | | |
| | | MALE HEADS | OTHER MALES | FEMALES | MALE HEADS | OTHER MALES | FEMALES |
| | | Number | Number | Number | Number | Number | Number |
| Persons available for work | 381 | 99 | 65 | 24 | 54 | 49 | 90 |
| Available persons who worked | 263 | 94 | 41 | 11 | 49 | 32 | 33 |
| | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> | <i>Per cent</i> |
| Days worked | | | | | | | |
| Persons avail- able for work | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| No days | 31 | 5 | 32 | 51 | 9 | 35 | 64 |
| 1-99 | 19 | 23 | 26 | 21 | 13 | 16 | 13 |
| 100-199 | 16 | 32 | 11 | 8 | 21 | 4 | 4 |
| 200-299 | 10 | 15 | 6 | 4 | 28 | 8 | .. |
| 300 and over | 24 | 25 | 25 | 13 | 26 | 37 | 19 |
| Employment | | | | | | | |
| Available per- sons who worked | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Nonfarm wage work | 81 | 81 | 70 | .. | 74 | 60 | 55 |
| Business or profession | 5 | 5 | .. | .. | 10 | .. | 3 |
| Farm opera- tion | 11 | 11 | .. | .. | 10 | 3 | .. |
| Farm wage work | 3 | 1 | 16 | .. | 6 | 12 | .. |
| Unpaid work | .. | .. | 14 | .. | .. | 25 | 42 |

NONFARM WORK: OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY

As the majority of those who had had some employment during the year were engaged in nonfarm work, the type of occupation and industry are important. Most of those available for work had been employed in the mining and manufacturing industries (Table 21). Very

* Persons not shown on Table 5. Being employed at the time of the interview was not indicative of most or full-time or year-round employment.

TABLE 21. MAJOR NONFARM INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION DURING THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK, BY SEX, HOUSEHOLD POSITION AND AVAILABILITY, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| MAJOR NONFARM INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK WHO DID NONFARM WORK | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|----------------|---------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | | | ACTIVELY LOOKING | NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING |
| | TOTAL | MALE HEADS | OTHER MALES | FEMALES | | |
| | Number | Number | Number | Number | Number | Number |
| All persons | 210 | 132 | 68 | 30 | 129 | 81 |
| Mining | 64 | 53 | 10 | 1 | 42 | 22 |
| Operator, manager ..... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... |
| Skilled labor | 20 | 17 | 3 | .... | 15 | 5 |
| Other labor | 44 | 36 | 7 | 1 | 27 | 17 |
| Other industrial .. | 70 | 41 | 21 | 8 | 47 | 23 |
| Operator, manager | 3 | 3 | .... | .... | 2 | 1 |
| Skilled labor | 27 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 18 | 9 |
| Other labor | 40 | 24 | 12 | 4 | 27 | 13 |
| Business & profession | 34 | 11 | 10 | 13 | 17 | 17 |
| Operator, manager | 5 | 5 | .... | .... | 2 | 3 |
| Skilled labor | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Other labor | 24 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 10 |
| Other nonfarm work | 42 | 27 | 7 | 8 | 23 | 19 |
| Operator, manager | 4 | 3 | .... | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Skilled labor | 19 | 15 | 4 | .... | 11 | 8 |
| Other labor | 19 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 10 | 9 |

few male heads of households were in the professions or in business. Other workers were more frequently employed in manufacturing and business.

Most of the workers available for employment had held relatively unskilled jobs during the year of record (Table 21). This was particularly true of females. Also very few of the workers were operators, managers, or foremen.

AGE AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Those reporting no work were usually considerably younger on the average than those who worked (Table 22). It is likely that some of those who had not worked during the 12 months prior to interview were people just entering the labor force. Most of the male heads of households had done some work, however limited, during the previous year.

MAJOR SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND WORK EXPERIENCE

A majority of both work experience groups lived in households

TABLE 22. CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS WHO REPORTED EITHER SOME WORK OR NO WORK DURING THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS, UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1951

| CHARACTERISTIC | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | |
|---|---|----------|---|----------|
| | REPORTING SOME WORK DURING THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS | | REPORTING NO WORK DURING THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS | |
| | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Total persons | 263 | 100 | 118 | 100 |
| Household status: | | | | |
| Male heads | 113 | 54 | 10 | 8 |
| Other males | 76 | 29 | 38 | 32 |
| Females | 44 | 17 | 70 | 60 |
| Age: | | | | |
| Under 25 | 81 | 31 | 69 | 58 |
| 25-44 | 118 | 45 | 36 | 31 |
| 45 and over | 64 | 24 | 13 | 11 |
| Major source of household income:* | | | | |
| Nonfarm work | 201 | 76 | 71 | 60 |
| Nonwork | 31 | 13 | 33 | 28 |
| Type of work preferred: | | | | |
| Farm work | 23 | 9 | 14 | 12 |
| Nonfarm work | 240 | 91 | 104 | 88 |
| Willingness to leave home to do nonfarm work:** | | | | |
| Willing | 166 | 63 | 53 | 45 |
| Unwilling | 74 | 28 | 51 | 43 |

*Twenty-eight workers were omitted, 10 of whom were from households in which agriculture was the major source of income.

**Persons preferring farmwork were not included.

where nonfarm work was the major source of income (Table 22). Persons with work experience, however, were more likely to reside in such households.

POTENTIAL MOBILITY AND WORK EXPERIENCE

One noticeable point of difference between those with work experience and those with none involved willingness to leave home. There was a marked tendency for those with work experience to be more willing to leave home to do nonfarm work. As previously indicated, many of them had worked away from home during the year of record (Table 18). In addition, a higher percentage of those with no work experience were young dependents at the time of the interview.

INCOME AND AVAILABILITY

Incomes of the households in the Valley were modest (Table 23). In general, the people who were available for employment came from households of about the same income level as other households. A slightly larger proportion, however, came from households with incomes below \$2,000—40 per cent as compared to 35 per cent. Somewhat fewer came from households with incomes of \$5,000 and over.

TABLE 23. HOUSEHOLD INCOME LEVEL OF PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK,
UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA, JULY 1954

| HOUSEHOLD INCOME* | PERSONS AVAILABLE FOR WORK | | | | | | | | PERSONS NOT AVAILABLE |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------|---------------|------|----------------|------|---------|------|-----------------------------|
| | ALL PERSONS | | MALE HEADS | | OTHER MALES | | FEMALES | | ALL PERSONS |
| | No. | Pct. | No. | Pct. | No. | Pct. | No. | Pct. | No. Pct. |
| Persons available | | | | | | | | | |
| for work | 381 | 100 | 153 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 1,906 100 |
| Under 1,000 | 58 | 15 | 29 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 19 | 17 | 357 19 |
| 1,000-1,999 | 94 | 25 | 44 | 29 | 34 | 30 | 16 | 14 | 308 16 |
| 2,000-2,999 | 81 | 21 | 38 | 25 | 21 | 19 | 22 | 19 | 393 21 |
| 3,000-3,999 | 55 | 15 | 16 | 10 | 17 | 15 | 22 | 19 | 351 18 |
| 4,000-4,999 | 41 | 11 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 11 | 16 | 14 | 220 11 |
| 5,000 and over | 36 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 10 | 238 13 |
| Not reported | 15 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 39 2 |

*Total income from all sources from June 1953 to June 1954.

Conclusions and Implications

To potential employers and action agency representatives, this report may have several significant implications.

It is evident that there exists in the Valley a surplus labor force of considerable size currently seeking nonfarm employment. Many of these individuals—approximately 8 per cent of the sample population—might be classified as more or less actively looking for work. Another 8 per cent consider themselves available for nonfarm employment, though not actively seeking it.

The number of people actually available for employment may be considerably higher than these percentages would indicate. The interviews were made during a period when job opportunities were very scarce and the people interviewed probably felt that there was no real need for their services. In a more favorable labor market a much higher proportion probably would have indicated a readiness for employment.

The majority of these individuals are apparently able-bodied; many of them are young in years as well as in work experience. Because of the historical importance of the bituminous coal industry in this area, many of these potential employables have worked in the mines. Because of recent trends in this industry—particularly the replacement of manpower by machinepower—the immediate future, barring a national emergency, does not appear too promising so far as mine employment is concerned.

Many of the potentially available for employment have a background of nonfarm work. Although most of their work was relatively unskilled, they should be adaptable to many kinds of nonfarm employment.

Another implication of major importance is the possibility that many of these individuals would leave their present homes to do nonfarm work. Evidence of this possibility lies in the fact that two-thirds of those available for work reported that they were willing to leave home to do nonfarm work. Three-fourths of the male heads of households were willing to move their families in order to take nonfarm employment. Approximately a fifth of these persons had actually worked away from home during the 12 months previous to interview.

In view of this situation, it is likely that suitable industries, situated either within the Valley or nearby, would attract a considerable labor force from this area. The existence of power and other industrial facilities and resources, as well as surplus labor, would appear to suggest the feasibility of locating within the Valley or in adjacent counties. Such a location would have the added advantage of relative stability in the labor force, as it would permit workers to maintain their family connections and community ties. Ample opportunities exist locally for the development of new industries or the expansion of others currently in operation.

GLOSSARY

AVAILABILITY GROUPS. Persons covered in this survey are classified into two major groups according to whether they were available for employment at the time of interview. These are "available for work" and "not available for work." The available group has been further classified according to the extent of their activity in seeking employment. These subgroups are: "actively looking" and "not actively looking."

FARM. This term is used as defined by the *U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1950*. A farm is a "place" with 3 or more acres, producing during the year a total value of agricultural commodities amounting to \$150 or more, exclusive of the home garden. Places of less than 3 acres are also treated as farms if the value of agricultural commodities sold during the year amounted to \$150 or more.

FARM OR RURAL-FARM PEOPLE. The definition of these terms corresponds with that of the *U.S. Census of Population, 1950*. People so classified are those who live on a "farm" (as defined above). The terms denote residence, not necessarily occupation.

HOUSEHOLD. This term refers to a living unit which includes all persons who live together. The term is used interchangeably with "family." A kinship relationship is usually involved but is not essential.

LEVEL OF LIVING. This term refers generally to the way in which a family or group lives and the items, both tangible and intangible, which it "consumes." The "level" is measured in this report by a scale of items of equal weighting, including such material possessions as electric lights, refrigerator, automobile or truck, daily newspaper, and so forth. See footnote 51 for further details.

NONFARM INDUSTRY. Rural manpower in the sample population was classified according to the industry group in which persons reported working, as follows: "mining," "manufacturing and other industry" (including sawmills, glass plants, chemical plants, etc.); "business and professions" (including managers and professional people, and clerks, technicians, laborers, etc., in a business or professional office); and "other nonfarm work" (including transportation and shipping, government, craftsman, and service workers). Each industry group can, in turn, be subclassed according to occupations and/or skills.

INSURED WORKER. Anyone who is covered by Unemployment Insurance is classified as an insured worker.

LOOKING FOR WORK. Implies more or less active seeking of employment. The term does not correspond with the Census term "unemployed."

Some persons who were "looking for work" in the sample population were employed even while "looking."

MAJOR SOURCE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME. All households in the sample were classified according to the most important single source of income during the year prior to the interview. The major source was defined as that source which furnished an income greater than the total income of *all* other sources *combined*. On this basis, five "types" of households were delineated: "farm," "farm wage work," "nonfarm," "nonwork," and "other." "Nonwork" households were those which reported most of their total income from such sources as rent, pensions, unemployment compensation, and other "nonwork" activities. A small number of households had no single major source in terms of the above definition. These were classified as "other."

OCCUPATION. Workers were classified into major type-of-work groups, as follows: "operating a farm," "unpaid work on farm," "farm wage work," "operating nonfarm business or profession," "unpaid work in a business," "nonfarm wage or salary work." In instances that involved both farm and nonfarm work, the number of days worked during the previous 12 months was used as the basis for determining the major kind of employment. For those who reported only nonfarm work, the "major" occupation was the one specified by the respondents. Individuals were also classified according to the degree and type of skill involved in their major employment: "operator, manager, and foreman"; "skilled labor"; and "unskilled labor." Unpaid family workers were treated as "unskilled" workers. "Operatives," such as truck drivers and machine operators, craftsmen, technical and administrative personnel, and related workers, were classified as "skilled."

RURAL-NONFARM PEOPLE. Persons were classified as "rural-nonfarm" if they lived outside "urban" centers, but not on farms. The term corresponds, in definition, with that used by the U.S. Census.

STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE. Differences between percentages or numbers are considered "statistically significant," for the purposes of this report, if the probability of occurrence of such differences because of chance alone is no greater than 1 in 20. This is sometimes referred to as significance at the "5 per cent level," or better. The absence of significance at this level is not necessarily evidence that the difference in question is invalid. Such a situation would indicate that the difference could be due to chance more frequently than 1 in 20 times. See footnote 11 for additional information on significance.

UNDEREMPLOYMENT. This term refers in general to a situation in which an individual's time and effort are not utilized to their full potential.

UNPAID FAMILY WORKERS. These are persons who worked without direct compensation on a farm or in a business. They are usually related by blood or marriage to the operator of the farm or business. They are considered as workers if they were employed for 15 or more hours during the week of record.

UPPER MONONGAHELA VALLEY. This area consists of 10 counties located in northern West Virginia along the upper reaches of the Monongahela River. The counties are as follows: Barbour, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, Tucker, and Upshur.

URBAN PEOPLE. The definition of this residence group corresponds to that of the U.S. Census. In general, these are the people who live in (a) centers of 2,500 or more inhabitants, incorporated or otherwise, and (b) the "densely settled urban fringe" adjacent to cities of 50,000 or more population. No "urban people" were included in the sample.



